

AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS

This Listing of Claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in
this application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-21. (Canceled)

22. (Original): A method of driving a flat lamp including a front panel and a rear panel, which are spaced a predetermined distance apart from each other and hermetically sealed, and a spacer, which is provided between the front panel and the rear panel to maintain the front and rear panels separated by the predetermined distance and secure a discharge space, wherein a predetermined discharge gas exists in the discharge space, a fluorescent layer is formed on an inner surface of at least one of the front and rear panels, and a plurality of electrode groups each comprising first, second, and third electrodes are provided in the rear panel, the method comprising:

(a) applying a first voltage to a first selected electrode among the first through third electrodes, taking account of a wall charge distribution and a space charge distribution, which were formed previously;

(b) applying a second voltage to a second selected electrode adjacent to the first selected electrode among the first through third electrodes, taking account of a wall charge distribution and a space charge distribution, which result from the application of the first voltage;

(c) applying a third voltage to the first selected electrode, taking account of a wall charge distribution and a space charge distribution, which result from the application of the second voltage; and

(d) applying a fourth voltage to an unselected electrode among the first through third electrodes.

23. (Original): The method of claim 22, wherein the first voltage has the same polarity as a wall charge previously induced in the first selected electrode.

24. (Original): The method of claim 23, wherein the second voltage has an opposite polarity to the first voltage.

25. (Original): The method of claim 24, wherein the third voltage has the same polarity as the second voltage.

26. (Original): The method of claim 25, wherein the fourth voltage has an opposite polarity to the third voltage.

27. (Original): The method of claim 23, wherein the first and second selected electrodes are the second and third electrodes, respectively.

28. (Original): The method of claim 23, further comprising repeating steps (a) through (d) after step (d).

29. (Original): A method of driving a flat lamp including a front panel and a rear panel, which are spaced a predetermined distance apart from each other and hermetically sealed, and a spacer, which is provided between the front panel and the rear panel to maintain the front and rear panels separated by the predetermined distance and secure a discharge space, wherein a predetermined discharge gas exists in the discharge space, a fluorescent layer is formed on an inner surface of at

least one of the front and rear panels, and a plurality of electrode groups each comprising first, second, third, and fourth electrodes are provided in the rear panel, the method comprising:

(a) inducing a discharge between a first selected electrode and an adjacent second selected electrode among the first through fourth electrodes;

(b) applying a first voltage to the second selected electrode, taking account of a wall charge distribution and a space charge distribution, which result from the discharge;

(c) applying a second voltage to a third selected electrode adjacent to the second selected electrode, taking account of a wall charge distribution and a space charge distribution, which result from the application of the first voltage;

(d) applying a third voltage to an unselected electrode among the first through fourth electrodes, taking account of a wall charge distribution and a space charge distribution, which result from the application of the second voltage;

(e) applying a fourth voltage to the third selected electrode, taking account of a wall charge distribution and a space charge distribution, which result from the application of the third voltage; and

(f) applying a fifth voltage to the second selected electrode, taking account of a wall charge distribution and a space charge distribution, which result from the application of the fourth voltage.

30. (Original): The method of claim 29, wherein the first voltage has the same polarity as a wall charge induced by the discharge.

31. (Original): The method of claim 30, wherein the second voltage has an opposite polarity to the first voltage.

32. (Original): The method of claim 31, wherein the third voltage has an opposite polarity to the second voltage.

33. (Original): The method of claim 32, wherein the fourth voltage has the same polarity as the third voltage.

34. (Original): The method of claim 33, wherein the fifth voltage has an opposite polarity to the fourth voltage.

35. (Original): The method of claim 29, further comprising repeating steps (a) through (f) after step (f).

36. (Original): The method of claim 29, wherein the first through fifth voltages have the same magnitude.

37. (Previously Presented): A flat lamp comprising:
a front panel, wherein radiated visual light is transmitted outside the flat lamp through the front panel;
a rear panel, which is separated from the front panel by a predetermined distance and hermetically sealed to the front panel;

a spacer, which maintains the front and rear panels separated by the predetermined distance and secures a discharge space between the front and rear panels;

a discharge gas, which exists in the discharge space;

a fluorescent layer formed on an inner surface of at least one of the front and rear panels; and

a plurality of electrode groups formed in the rear panel, each electrode group comprising at least three electrodes,

wherein two of said at least three electrodes are adapted to sustain a discharge voltage, and a third is adapted to function as an igniter for decreasing a discharge voltage.

38. (Previously Presented): The flat lamp of claim 37, wherein the rear panel comprises:

a rear glass substrate, which is provided with the electrode groups;

a dielectric layer, which is formed on the rear glass substrate to cover the electrode groups; and

a fluorescent layer formed on the dielectric layer.

39. (Previously Presented): The flat lamp of claim 37, wherein the front panel comprises:

a front glass substrate;

a dielectric layer, which is formed on a back surface of the front glass substrate; and

a fluorescent layer formed on a back surface of the dielectric layer.